



TEAM TALK

117th Air Refueling Wing
Birmingham, Alabama



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Commander's Column

OLD GLORY

by Colonel E.B. Self
117 IS Commander

With the season of thankfulness approaching, I thought about how thankful I am to live in and serve our great nation. The flag of the United States was a very frequent sight recently on Veterans Day and is even



more frequently seen around the 4th of July holiday. Our flag symbolizes our great nation and is readily recognized around the globe. How much do you know about our flag?

Old Glory, the Star-Spangled Banner, and Stars & Stripes are names of our flag likely familiar to you. How about Freedom's Flag or Starry Flag?

Before June 24, 1912, neither the order of the stars nor the proportions of our flag were prescribed. Consequently, flags before this period sometimes show unusual arrangements of stars and odd proportions of the stripes and the canton (the blue field containing the white stars). President Taft's Executive Order on June 24, 1912 established standard proportions for the elements of the flag and provided for arrangement of the stars in six horizontal rows of eight each (for our then 48 states), a single point of each star to be upward.

Initially, the Flag Resolution of June 14, 1777, resolved that the flag of the United States be made of thirteen stripes, alternating red and white; that the union be thirteen stars (for the 13 original colonies), white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation. The colors of Old Glory were not given meaning, but those same colors in the Great Seal did have meaning. Charles Thompson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, reporting to Congress on the Seal, stated: "The colors of the pales (the vertical stripes) are those used in the flag of the United States; White signifies purity and innocence, Red, hardiness and valor, and Blue, the color of the Chief (the broad band above the stripes) signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice."

On April 4, 1818, Congress provided for 13 stripes and one star for each state, to be added to the flag on the 4th of July following the admission of each new state. Alabama was admitted December 14, 1819, and the 22nd star representing Alabama was placed on our flag on the 4th of July, 1820. Since then, stars would be added predominately singularly, with the exception to our flags of 1890 and 1912 when multiple states were admitted the respective preceding years. Our present flag is the 27th since the Flag Resolution of 1777.

God bless each one of you and God bless America!

Diamond Cutter

Education is very important

by Master Sgt. Orvie Mattson
117 CES First Sergeant

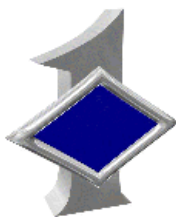
Good day to all. I want to take a few minutes to talk about education. Everyone who is reading this has heard that education is very important. Unfortunately, this frequently comes from heads of industry that have already done the time and completed their degrees. If you are like me, you might ask yourself, "What do those folks know! They are done with their education and they aren't walking around in my shoes." Well, I hope to add a little "street cred" to the statement.

There are several factors that prevent folks from completing their educations. The two biggest issues are time and money. I will address the time first. Keep in mind that everything that I relay is from my personal experience so here it goes. I work a 40 hour work week with my police department. In addition, I have part time job that I work one to two days a week. If you add in my responsibilities as First Sergeant which takes anywhere from three to seven days a month depending on what is going on in the world and sprinkle in domestic responsibilities such as my five-year old having to attend soccer and karate, you can see that my usable time is very small. I am one of the lucky ones whose employer rewards it's employees with a 5% raise for two years of college and a 10% raise for a bachelor's degree so I decided that I was just hurting myself by not completing my bachelor's degree. My biggest issue at that point was time management. I checked in to taking night classes and classes on my days off but it just didn't fit my schedule. Then I saw an ad for online classes through Herzing University. I checked with their counselors and found that they were willing to

give me credit for both my previous college classes and, more importantly, for my military experience. With Herzing, the semesters are two months instead of four which means that you finish a class in half the time. In addition, classroom activity is based on weekly assignments that you complete at your own pace. The greatest thing about on on-line higher education is the sheer number of accredited on-line colleges and universities. A great place to start would be onlinecolleges.org which has a database of more than 250 schools.

The second issue is money. College is very expensive but there are an abundance of organizations out there to help defer the costs. The first option that I would look in to would be your employer. More and more companies are offering to help pay for their employees school. This benefits the employer because they get a more educated well rounded employee. The next option is right under your nose. I am referring, of course, to the GI Bill. If you have been deployed or placed on active duty since 9-11 you are most likely eligible for some pretty decent educational incentives. The last is also the most varied. There are a huge number of scholarship and grant programs available to military and military family members. I received an e-mail from Pam Lacey that had 15 pages of possible sources! The bottom line is, there is no time like the present and completing your education can only help you. As an example, if you are applying for a job and you have a degree while your competition does not, that is a pretty good selling point. Think about it.

First Shirt Notes



Respect for the Flag: All personnel in uniform and outside must face the flag and salute during the raising and lowering of the flag. Upon the first note of the national anthem or "To the Colors," all personnel in uniform who aren't in formation should stand and face the flag (or the sound of the music if the flag is not visible) and salute. Hold the salute until the last note of the music is played. All vehicles in motion should come to a stop at the first note of the music and the occupants should sit quietly until the music ends. When in civilian clothes face the flag (or the sound of the music if the flag is not visible) and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart.

SAFETY NET

Accepted Behaviors

by Master Sgt. Trey Hamm
117ARW Ground Safety Manager

What thoughts do you have when you see a member of the 117th driving around base while talking on their cellular phone or texting? They are brazenly flaunting a violation of an Air Force, ANG, and 117th ARW policy that was written solely to keep people safe. They're violating an order that was issued by the President and was repeated to them by the Wing Commander; an order that was given in an effort to reduce the enormous number of injuries and fatalities that are occurring due to this behavior. We have all seen, heard, and read about these injuries and fatalities. Chances are, you know someone who has been involved in an accident that was caused by driver distraction. So what thoughts do you have when you see a unit member driving around base while texting or talking on their cellular phone?

Most people are aware of the safety policies, rules, and instructions in life. That's not always the case but, generally, education is not the problem. Due to time constraints, pressure, laziness, or lackadaisical attitudes, they decide to deviate from the established policy. Perhaps they text or talk on their cell phone as they depart the base. Maybe they operate a forklift without a spotter or operate a manlift without wearing fall protection. They don't experience a mishap on this occasion and they aren't corrected by their supervisor; there are no negative consequences. The lack of a negative consequence gives a

"positive feedback" that the negative behavior is acceptable. So now the risky behavior has become an accepted behavior.

I recently read in a mishap report that "The mishap individual's ability to accomplish the previous operations without a negative result confirmed to the mishap individual that it was an acceptable or correct practice."

This is dangerous in any organization. When out-of-the-norm behaviors that introduce additional risk become accepted in an organization, the odds work against the organization's success. The principles of risk management tell us that the organization will probably not have a mishap immediately, but that over time the odds become steeper and steeper if the behavior continues. Eventually a mishap will occur. Perhaps that driver drifts into the curb and blows a tire. The consequences are minor. Or maybe that driver runs over his co-worker who was jogging to improve his fitness level. The consequences are severe.

We need to stress the dangers of accepting unnecessary risk by highlighting that "even though you get away with it once or even ten times, the risk still remains and it is an unacceptable behavior in our culture."

Beginning January 2012 the base newsletter will be transmitted via the internet on our public website:

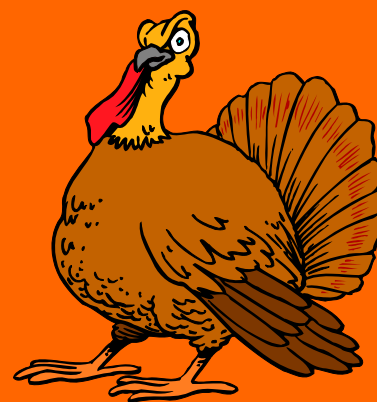
<http://www.117arw.ang.af.mil/>

The last issue of the Team Talk to be distributed through email is planned for December 2011. Our public website allows you to access the most up-to-date newsletters and photographs.

The Team Talk staff will continue to take submissions for articles via email and are counting on units to highlight their missions through their stories.

Submissions can still be emailed to our staff at
117ARW.Public.Affairs@ang.af.mil.

As before, all submissions are due NLT COB Sunday UTA for publication.



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Thanksgiving

Source: *Insights For Living*, Charles R. Swindoll, 2008 & 2009)

by Capt. Daryl Hamaker
117 ARW Chaplain

Thanksgiving, the word brings many thoughts to our minds but as you read this I would like to ask you to reflect. Reflect on your life and the many things that you have to be thankful for as an American. Reflection is a good thing and can place things into proper perspective when we start to think about what really matters. On this great holiday as we reflect it should put steel in our nerves and cause fresh blood to course through our patriotic veins as our minds take us back to our great heritage. It takes us back with humbling nostalgia to those first dreadful winters at places like Plymouth and Jamestown, where less than half of those who first landed survived. But what grand men and women those pioneers became—those who pressed on. Reading their names today is like reading a page out of our heroes' Hall of Fame. In words taken from Hebrews 11, they were those "of whom the world was not worthy." May we pause and give thanks for those who came before us, those who had the stuff of which greatness is made.

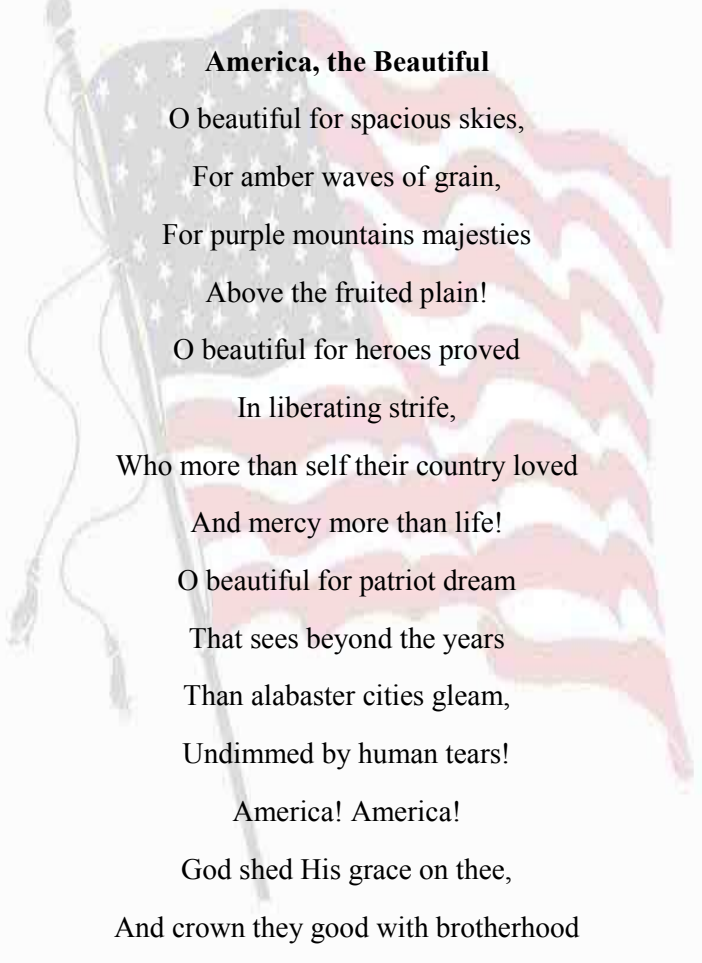
Thanksgiving brings to mind words like integrity, respect, vigilance, devotion, dignity, honor, discipline, freedom, sacrifice, heroism, humility, peace, and godliness. Our forefathers challenged us to trim off the fat of indolence, passivity, and compromise, to rid ourselves of the stigma of strife and prejudice, and the sickness of selfishness and greed.

As we reflect and look around it seems that everyone around us continues to reach for and cling to what is, Thanksgiving pleads that we might think of others in greater need and set our affections on things unseen. As we live with the threat of terrorism and as our culture gives way to shameful and brutal acts of violence it is so easy to let ourselves become totally taken by fear and a barren future; a world without color and laughter. Thanksgiving stands tall and shouts the same message every year: "There is a better way to think and to live! Your God is still blessing you with the fragrance of forgiveness and the beauty of His bounty."

May we make it a point to pause each Thanksgiving and do what the name of this holiday tells us to do. When we do, I believe without exception we will find beauty taking the place of fear of barrenness and deep joy returning to our souls.

A song written long ago by Katharine Lee Bates, perhaps on Thanksgiving Day when times were hard and nights seemed long, she was determined to see beyond the present and focus her mind on things beautiful. In her song we are reminded of why it is worth it to make this a time of pause and give thanks:

America, the Beautiful



O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountains majesties
Above the fruited plain!
O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life!
O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Than alabaster cities gleam,
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

May we remember that Thanksgiving transcends our present trials; that it is a day of magnificent memories, a day of renewed commitment to the things that matter. Thanksgiving, may it arrive this year with a forceful and throbbing impact leaving each one of us gripped with gratitude!

by Airman First Class Chad Carroll
117 AMX

EANGUS



Who likes getting paid for four Active Duty Days instead of two on drill weekends? That's four retirement points instead of two retirement points. Who likes early retirement provisions? Who likes the Post 9/11 Veterans Education Improvement Act of 2010?

If you like all these benefits and still want them in the future then become a part of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States. EANGUS is a professional organization dedicated to supporting the rights and benefits of enlisted members of the National Guard.

As the downsizing of the military continues, we must fight to continue to maintain the benefits we have and to continue our efforts to keep the National Guard a viable part of the Total Military. For becoming a member of EANGUS you are entitled to many benefits such as; discounts on *Apple* and *Dell* computers, hotel discounts, annual scholarships, annual national and state conferences, legislative advocacy on Capitol Hill, etc. Members will also receive *The New Patriot*, a magazine designed to keep all members current on happenings within the organization.

The Legislative Goals of EANGUS are published annually. The goals are established through the resolution processes that are passed by association delegates at the annual conference. From these resolutions come the issues that EANGUS will pursue in Congress and in the DoD. At the EANGUS Conference, held each August, delegates from our state help set up the national EANGUS agenda for the upcoming year. The State Organization "ENGAA" hosts a State Conference, normally the third weekend of March so that our members can stay up to date on trends affecting guard men and women and where we can vote on key issues.

Membership dues are \$20.00 for regular and associate members. Life membership is also available to those members wishing to make a long term commitment. Membership is optional yet we encourage you to join this fine organization to ensure we have a strong voice to represent us. Please join us and encourage others to join, including your Senior Leadership.

Help us secure the future of the Alabama National Guard. We cannot do it alone. If you have any question please get in touch with CMSgt. David L. Wright or A1C Chad Carroll.

Join us in Celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the Alabama Air National Guard and the 106th Squadron



When: January 20, 2012

Where: The Club, Birmingham, Ala.

Time: 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Dress: Mess Dress; Semi-Formal (Enlisted)

\$30 a person E-5 and above

\$20 a person E-4 and below

To Purchase tickets contact: Capt. Lisa Weaver, ext. 2527 or MSgt. Sam Dennis, ext. 2202



In Flanders Fields

McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" remains to this day one of the most memorable war poems ever written. It is a lasting legacy of the terrible battle in the Ypres salient in the spring of 1915.

Although he had been a doctor for years and had served in the South African War, it was impossible to get used to the suffering, the screams, and the blood here, and Major John McCrae had seen and heard enough in his dressing station to last him a lifetime.

As a surgeon attached to the 1st Field Artillery Brigade, Major McCrae, who had joined the McGill faculty in 1900 after graduating from the University of Toronto, had spent seventeen days treating injured men -- Canadians, British, Indians, French, and Germans -- in the Ypres salient.

It had been an ordeal that he had hardly thought possible. McCrae later wrote of it: "I wish I could embody on paper some of the varied sensations of that seventeen days... Seventeen days of Hades! At the end of the first day if anyone had told us we had to spend seventeen days there, we would have folded our hands and said it could not have been done."

One death particularly affected McCrae. A young friend and former student, Lieut. Alexis Helmer of Ottawa, had been killed by a shell burst on 2 May 1915. Lieutenant Helmer was buried later that day in the little cemetery outside McCrae's dressing station, and McCrae had performed the funeral ceremony in the absence of the chaplain.

The next day, sitting on the back of an ambulance parked near the dressing station beside the Canal de l'Yser, just a few hundred yards north of Ypres, McCrae vented his anguish by composing a poem. The major was no stranger to writing, having authored several medical texts besides dabbling in poetry.

In the nearby cemetery, McCrae could see the wild poppies that sprang up in the ditches in that part of Europe, and he spent twenty minutes of precious rest time scribbling fifteen lines of verse in a notebook.

A young soldier watched him write it. Cyril Allinson, a twenty-two year old sergeant-major, was delivering mail that day when he spotted McCrae. The major looked up as Allinson approached, then went on writing while the sergeant-major stood there quietly. "His face was very tired but calm as we wrote," Allinson recalled. "He looked around from time to time, his eyes straying to Helmer's grave." When McCrae finished five minutes later, he took his mail from Allinson and, without saying a word, handed his pad to the young NCO. Allinson was moved by what he read: "The poem was exactly an exact description of the scene in front of us both. He used the word blow in that line because the poppies actually were being blown that morning by a gentle east wind. It never occurred to me at that time that it would ever be published. It seemed to me just an exact description of the scene." In fact, it was very nearly not published. Dissatisfied with it, McCrae tossed the poem away, but a fellow officer retrieved it and sent it to newspapers in England. The Spectator, in London, rejected it, but Punch published it on 8 December 1915.



In Flanders Fields

by John McCrae, May 1915

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Mobility Exercise



Air Force photos by MSgt. David Maxwell and TSgt. Jon Roebuck

National American Indian Heritage Month

Provided by Maj. Kimberly Elston
117 ARW Equal Opportunity Officer

Theme: Service, Honor, Respect: Strengthening Our Cultures and Communities

Source: Indianaffairs.gov



For almost one hundred years, Americans both Indian and non-Indian have urged that there be permanently designated by the nation a special place on the calendar to honor the contributions, achievements, sacrifices, and cultural and historical legacy of the original inhabitants of what is now the United States and their descendants: the American Indian and Alaska Native people.

The quest for a national honoring of Native Americans began in the early 20th Century as a private effort. As far back as the late 1970s, Congress has enacted legislation and subsequent presidents have issued annual proclamations designating a day, a week or a month to celebrate and commemorate the nation's American Indian and Alaska Native heritage. In 2009, Congress passed and the President signed legislation that established the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day of each year as "Native American Heritage Day."

Native American Heritage Month Quiz

How Many federal recognized tribal governments are there in the United States?

- A. ☐ 717
- B. ☐ 200
- C. ☐ 565

In 1938, the Trail of Tears was associated with whom?

- A. ☐ Blackfoot
- B. ☐ Mohave
- C. ☐ Cherokee

Who founded the Chicago City Ballet in 1974?

- A. ☐ Maria Tallchief
- B. ☐ Tammie Allen
- C. ☐ Black Shawl

White corn meal symbolizes the male and yellow the female. Which Native American tribe combines the two meals into a corn mush and put it into a wedding basket before the traditional ceremony?

- A. ☐ Pueblo
- B. ☐ Cherokee
- C. ☐ Navajo

The Sundance is practiced by many Native American tribes, what is it considered to be?

- A. ☐ Way of cultivating the land
- B. ☐ A prayer
- C. ☐ A wedding

What is one Native American Tribe in Michigan?

- A. ☐ Navajo
- B. ☐ Sioux
- C. ☐ Chippewa

Answers: (C) 565 (C) Cherokee (A) Maria Tallchief
(C) Navajo (A) A Prayer (C) Chippewa

Promotions



First Lieutenant

Charles B. Hawkins

Chief Master Sergeant

Jeff Salakar

Senior Master Sergeant

Sheila A. Gray

Master Sergeant

Christopher Owens

John C. McCullough III

Technical Sergeant

Galen A. Owens

Staff Sergeant

Jacob w. Hendrix

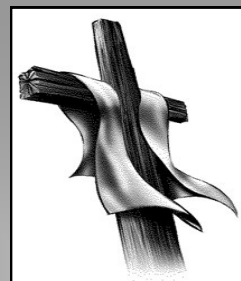


Enlistments

Staff Sgt. Patrick Harbin
Senior Airman Matthew Belair
Airman First Class Derrick Miller
Airman Basic Charles Johnson

In Memory

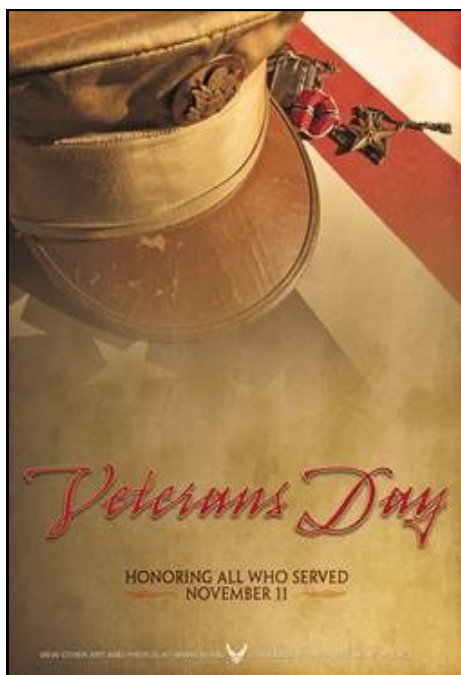
CMSgt. Mike Holloway's mother, Mrs. Helen Sue Walker, passed away.



Join us for Worship Services Sunday UTAs

Protestant Worship
Service
Wing Auditorium
Bldg 151
Time: 8:30 a.m.

Catholic Worship
Service
Classroom - Bldg 205
Time: 8:30 a.m.



117th FSS CUSTOMER

SERVICE HOURS

TUESDAY	0730-1630
WEDNESDAY	0730-1130
THURSDAY	0730-1630
FRIDAY	0730-1630

117th ARW 2011 UTA Schedule

NOV	DEC
19-20	10-11

117th ARW 2012 UTA Schedule

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
21-22	11-12	10-11	14-15	19-20	09-10	14-15	11-12	08-09	13-14	10-11	08-09